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MAYOR EMANUEL AND OBAMA FOUNDATION ANNOUNCE NEW SOUTH SIDE CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY BRANCH AT OBAMA PRESIDENTIAL CENTER

New CPL Branch Will Bring Additional Programs and Resources to Chicago's South Side

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, the Obama Foundation, and Chicago Public Library (CPL) today announced a new public library branch will be located at the future Obama Presidential Center (OPC), bringing a new neighborhood anchor and the best of CPL programming and resources to the surrounding South Side communities. This unique partnership is the first of its kind, allowing public library access within a presidential center.

"The Chicago Public Library branch at the Obama Presidential Center will offer tremendous educational and cultural benefits to the South Shore community and all of Chicago," Mayor Emanuel said. "In the spirit of Barack and Michelle Obama, this branch will serve as a neighborhood anchor with 21st century learning opportunities and shared spaces that will bring together community residents to gather, share and succeed for generations to come."

The new library branch will offer Chicago's library system an opportunity to develop a state-of-the-art library for the community, with an emphasis on civic engagement, which is at the core of the mission of the Obama Foundation. Programs at the new branch will be fully integrated with the overall visitor experience at the OPC. CPL will coordinate with the Obama Foundation team to align with the programming throughout the campus to inspire and deepen the Center's impact.

This CPL branch will house a multimedia collection with a focus on civic engagement and conduct programming to engage community members. The initial vision for the library includes spaces for reading and study, including homework help, that can be converted to open seating for programs and events; a dedicated children's area and a YOUmedia program for teens to explore the world and their own creativity using new technologies; and meeting space that will be available for public use. Staff will also be trained to connect job-seekers to workforce development and education services. Traditional library programs, such as book clubs and intergenerational educational and cultural programming, will also be available.

"A public library underscores so much of what we at the Obama Foundation are about," said Marty Nesbitt, Board Chair for the Obama Foundation. "The public library is the essential civic institution,

a place for community to gather and engage, and a place for the young and the young at heart to learn. CPL is among the most impressive library systems in the country and we are incredibly lucky to partner with them to offer more of their programming and resources to South Side residents.”

“When designing the campus of the Obama Presidential Center, we’ve listened to what those in the community most want and set out to offer something for everyone,” explained Robbin Cohen, Executive Director at the Obama Foundation and the person tasked with overseeing the partnership with CPL. “With a partnership with CPL, we realized we could both address the need for a library in this neighborhood, and give young people in the area a fun and educational way to engage with the Obama Presidential Center.”

Over the past six years, Chicago Public Library has witnessed one of the largest capital investments in recent history. Through City investment and innovative partnerships, the Library has seen over \$200 million of new capital projects and investments in the people and programs that activate community anchors. By the end of 2018, CPL will have 11 new library buildings and 14 additional locations with major renovations and expansions.

Chicago Public Library successfully uses their branches as cultural and education arteries into Chicago’s neighborhoods. The CPL branch will be a portal for OPC visitors to engage with the world beyond the Center. Through Library and Foundation networks and programs, visitors will be able to access knowledge and experiences that serve as catalysts for innovation, education and community.

“Libraries serve as community anchors, making knowledge and learning accessible for everyone,” said CPL Commissioner Brian Bannon. “We’re excited to partner with the Obama Foundation to create this new CPL branch, which will provide a place for South Side community residents of all ages to gather, share, learn and succeed.”

CPL serves 9.9 million visitors per year with nearly 200,000 people visiting the Blackstone Branch and Coleman Branch -- the two branch libraries closest to the future home of the OPC in Jackson Park -- in 2017. With increased demand for CPL programming, such as YOUmedia, the Summer Learning Challenge, Homework Help, and Cybernavigator, the new branch will allow CPL to provide these resources to more library patrons across the South Side.

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About Chicago Public Library

Since 1873, Chicago Public Library (CPL) has encouraged lifelong learning by welcoming all people and offering equal access to information, entertainment and knowledge through innovative services and programs, as well as cutting-edge technology. Through its 80 locations, the Library provides free access to a rich collection of materials, both physical and digital, and presents the highest quality author discussions, exhibits and programs for children, teens and adults. CPL received the Social Innovator Award from Chicago Innovation Awards; won a National Medal for Library Services from the Institute for Museum and Library Services; was named the first ever winner of the National Summer Learning Association’s Founder’s Award in recognition of its Summer Learning Challenge; and was ranked number one in the U.S., and third in the world by an international study of major urban libraries conducted by the Heinrich Heine University Dusseldorf in Germany. For more information, please call (312) 747-4050 or visit chipublic.org. To follow CPL on social media, visit us on Twitter ([@chipublic](https://twitter.com/chipublic)) or Facebook ([Chicago Public Library](https://www.facebook.com/ChicagoPublicLibrary)).